GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1957
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2000
PROVISION OF FREE OF COST MEDICINES
RAJESH RANJAN (PAPPU YADAV)

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide free medicines to people living below poverty line under the scheme `Health for all`;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether large scale cultivation of medicinal herbs for manufacturing cheap medicines has been under consideration of the Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the amount likely to be allocated to States for this scheme during 1999-2000; and

(f) the time by which this scheme is likely to be introduced in Bihar and other States?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SH SHANMUGAM)

(a)&(b) There is no such scheme as Health for All. This is the overall objective of the National Health Policy of the country. Medicines are generally provided free to the in-patients in the hospitals and under health programmes.

(c)to(f) There is a Central Scheme for development and cultivation of medicinal plants (in herbal gardens) and to develop Agro-techniques for cultivation of medicinal plants. Funds are allocated to institutions and not States. 34 institutions also identified for the purpose are working on 140 plants, the results of which will be evident after 2 to 3 years.

Under the Department of Family Welfare, under the RCHprogramme there is `Vanaspati Van Yojana` to increase the availability of medicinal plants used in ISM drugs for mother and child health, in which ;the denuded area of 3,000 to 4,000 hectares will be brought under the medicinal plants plantation activity.
Governments of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have initiated the activity of Vanaspati Van Yojana. Proposals of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kerala are under process.These efforts will help to provide genuine medicines at reasonable prices.